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- Podiumsdiskussion auf dem 39. DGS-Kongress in Göttingen: *Soziologie für Alle*
- Nicole Burzan: *Über eine multiparadigmatische Soziologie*
- Birgit Blättel-Mink: *Krisenwissenschaft Soziologie – Wissenschaft in der Krise?*
- Martin Schröder: *Der blinde Fleck der Soziologie*

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Das ambivalente Verhältnis zwischen Politik und
Religion • Europe and Beyond: Boundaries, Barriers and
Belonging • Klimawandel und urbane Transformationen
zur CO₂-neutralen und resilienten Stadt

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Liebe Kolleginnen, liebe Kollegen,

»Ich habe früh gemerkt, dass ich ein Klischee bin, ich habe ja Soziologie studiert.«¹

Klar und knapp bringt die Moderatorin Barbara Schöneberger den Nutzen ihres Studiums in einem kürzlich veröffentlichten Interview mit dem Tagesspiegel auf den Punkt. Sie beschreibt in dem Gespräch, wie die soziologische geschulte Selbstbeobachtung es ihr ermöglichte, die Differenz des gewünschten Selbstbildes (in etwa Isabelle Huppert) und der abweichenden Fremdzuschreibung (ziemlich genau Dolly Parton) nicht nur zu realisieren, sondern auch zu nutzen. Denn ähnlich wie Dolly Parton, die ihr Image als *Dumb Blond* (so der erste Song ihres ersten Albums »Hello, I'm Dolly« aus dem Jahr 1967) bis zur karikaturesken Übersteigerung pflegte, nur um es dann immer wieder punktuell genüsslich zu konterkarieren, hat auch Barbara Schöneberger den gezielten sozialen Erwartungsbruch äußerst erfolgreich in eine berufliche Strategie umgesetzt. Solche Formen einer *applied sociology*, die wohl niemand in die inzwischen notorischen Bemerkungen zur Praxisrelevanz von Studienmodulen schreiben würde, sind wahrscheinlich vielfältiger und überraschender, als wir es im universitären Alltag vermuten. Sie werfen auch die Frage auf, inwiefern soziologische Bildung jenseits des Fachstudiums, in anderen Fächern, in der Ausbildung von Lehrerinnen und Lehrern oder auch als Bestandteil von Schulcurricula vermittelt werden kann und sollte. Sie finden zu dieser Thematik in diesem Heft Ausschnitte aus einer Podiumsdiskussion, die im Rahmen des 39. DGS Kongresses im September in Göttingen geführt wurde. Und auch der auf Initiative des Ausschusses »Soziologie in Schule und Lehre« hin verfasste Aufruf der DGS für mehr soziologische Grundbildung in der Schule (ebenfalls in diesem Heft) bezieht hier Stellung.

¹ »Ich mache nur das, was ich kann. Nichts anderes.« Interview mit Barbara Schöneberger, im Tagesspiegel vom 18. November 2018.

Auf ihrem 39. Kongress in Göttingen hat die DGS zwei Masterarbeiten und zwei Dissertationen im Fach Soziologie als herausragende Abschlussarbeiten ausgezeichnet. Wir möchten Ihnen diese Arbeiten in der SOZIOLOGIE vorstellen. In diesem Heft präsentieren Brigitte Zamzow (Masterarbeit) und Marius Meinhof (Dissertation) ihre Forschung. In Heft 2 werden Elena Höpfner (Masterarbeit) und Tine Haubner (Dissertation) Einblicke in ihre Abschlussarbeiten geben.

Is Affordable Housing the new Social Housing?

A Case Study of New York City's Public Housing in Harlem

Brigitte Zamzow

Globalization changes cities drastically all over the world. The institution of the nation state has been affected by the neoliberal turn since the 1980s. In the Global North, liberalizing the markets meant withdrawing any state control not only for the markets, but also a backing out of social responsibilities. Social Housing for example in the USA counted as failed since Pruitt Igoe's demolition in 1972 (Urban 2012), and its other remnants of a tentative welfare state were eliminated in the 1990s during Bill Clinton's administration (Mead 1992). Europe followed suit soon afterwards, arguably to a lesser extent and varying from country to country within the EU.

The question arises how much leverage a city itself has in order to maintain or create socially stable neighborhoods albeit globalization changing the cities' landscapes and the state incessantly backing out of its responsibilities. The maintenance of social housing is one way to investigate this trend. Not only in the U.S., but also in Europe and South America, *affordable housing* is being discussed both amongst the public and the scientific sphere.

Especially tenants and activists on the ground are eager to understand the profound changes of the shift from fully subsidized housing for low-income families as well as *aspiring* working-class (Mead 1992) and middle-class families to a less clearly defined public-private project. Does it mean that once more in a city's history those deviant from the social mainstream norm will be displaced or resettled for the sake of a *good*, a *safe*, a *whiter* city

(Millington 2011)? Will *deconcentrating poverty* result in making the poor invisible when they are being kicked out of their apartments and resettle in other pockets of poverty further outside the city?

New York City will be investigated here because most other US American cities have bulldozed their utopian ideas of egalitarian housing in the shape of modernist high-rise towers, following the federal HOPE VI program that substituted the mass housing blocks with mainly middle-income two-story houses (Hyra 2008: 83). In contrast, New York City has been able to provide public housing up until today due to its almost social-democratic governmental setup. But the modernist concrete buildings need renovations and the Housing Authority seems unable to provide the funds while global capital pressurizes the neighborhoods in various ways (ibid: 107 f.).

Harlem nowadays is booming. Interestingly enough, in New York, neighborhoods that have formerly been ghettoized are experiencing an influx of better-off whites. Harlem is one of them: Higher-income whites replacing lower income blacks in the »very same neighborhoods that experienced *white flight* and urban renewal in the 50s and 60s« (Powell, Spencer 2003: 437). This fact makes neighborhoods like Harlem or Bushwick unique in the literature on gentrification in the USA because black ghettos had been considered *ungentrifiable* in other cities. It is exactly those inner-city areas that blacks were pushed into and not allowed out of, while now, they are pushed out.

Recently, New York City has introduced an affordable housing scheme that promises to satisfy both claims for social responsibility and speculator's investment seeking: Unused parklands within the public grounds are leased out to investors in order to build both market-rate and affordable housing right next to the public housing blocks. By revitalizing the area, it promises to densify the city and therefore prevent further sprawl, to create more housing for several strata of society, and to maintain (not create!) enough housing for low-income families in the city (The City of New York 2015: 83).

I investigated the affordability scheme in one specific neighborhood that counts as disadvantaged albeit undergoing gentrification and has had a high percentage of black families living there since 1900: Harlem. The outcome shows that affordability schemes are one tool amongst others for the city to put a frontier against ruthless land speculation, but it is not a solution to provide and secure housing for low-income families, especially if vulnerable and/or marginalized due to racism.

The Race Factor in Urban Revitalization Processes and Current »Social Mix« Debates

New York City shows how in the past urban renewal in the 1930s and then in the late 1950s until early 1970s during the Robert Moses era was executed on the backs of mainly poor, colored families. Entire, predominantly black neighborhoods were erased from the city map (State of New York, Division of Housing 1958) before more affluent activists became aware of the ramifications this urban renewal might bring to their own buzzing neighborhoods. One of them was the famous journalist Jane Jacobs living in the mainly middle-class Greenwich Village (Jacobs 1961). These movements were able to stop Moses' remaining mega project plans in the end but it is a proof of the fact that not everybody is capable of entering the discourse and therefore able to claim one's right to the city (Harvey 2008).

As John Powell puts it in an article where he links urban revitalization processes to current public housing policy in a way very critical towards racist behavioral practices, »the redevelopment of public housing is a form of *exclusive* redevelopment that is designed to exclude the very poor from the revitalized spaces and render them safe for resettlement by the wealthy and affluent« (Powell, Spencer 2003: 452). The author Derek Hyra states that

»the destruction of housing which is sponsored by the federal government [through HOPE VI; BZ], leads to the displacement of the poor from neighborhoods that are in the midst of redeveloping. This is a form of institutional racism since poor African Americans affected by this policy are being relocated to highly segregated and impoverished neighborhoods.« (Hyra 2008: 159).

While race plays one important role in the revitalization practices, the second factor to investigate is social class. Some academic literature stresses that introducing policies that embrace gentrification does the exact opposite of including all kinds of income (Bridge 2012; Varady 2005; Vale 2006). Others contend that it will lead poor people out of their misery by being exposed to more middle-income families both as role models as well as enhanced services and amenities (Briggs 2006; Gans 1961; Chaskin, Joseph 2010). Needless to say, the argument for social mixing is mostly used when wealthy families move into poorer areas, but the other way around hardly ever gets attention as a possible solution.

The Affordability Scheme

Today, the New York City Housing Authority finds itself not being able to stem the acute shortage of federal funds to renovate its buildings (New York City Housing Authority 2018a). The other side of the coin is that it wants to revitalize the formerly disadvantaged neighborhoods that have already been the focus of global investment and gentrification processes. In NYCHA pairing up with the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (NYC-HPD), it incentivizes private developers to build on public housing grounds by leasing them out. They are contracted into building *affordable housing* to serve a wide range of income distribution amongst families (ibid.).

NYCHA hopes to attract middle-income families, thus adding to its yearly turnover and therefore relieving its financial instability. In order to compete as a global city, New York City's government believes that it must offer relatively affordable housing to a range of the city's inhabitants. Michael Bloomberg, predecessor of the current mayor Bill de Blasio, launched a multi-billion Dollar, 165,000-unit program targeted at both lower- and middle-income New Yorkers (Bloom 2008: 267 f.), which is being continued by his successor.

First of all, any housing is considered *affordable* when a household spends no more than one-third of its income on rent and utilities (United States Census Bureau). However, in New York in 2014, 56% of all renters were rent-burdened. More than every second household spent more than a third of their salary on rent. Three in ten renter households even paid more than half of their salary on rent (Gaumer, West 2015). There is no doubt that there is a severe housing crisis throughout the city on many income levels. The New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey conducted by NYC Housing Preservation and Development adds that there is a vacancy rate of 7.3% for high-income units whereas for low-income families, there is a severe shortage as the vacancy rate for much needed units for less than \$800 is only 1.8% (ibid: 3 f.). This shows the mismatch between units being produced and units that are needed.

When constructing affordable housing options, the city government relies on defined income categories set by federal government of incomes when negotiating the number of affordable units with private developers. Affordable housing options are divided into income categories per household of four. These brackets are split into five categories: extremely low-income families that make an annual income of up to \$25,150, very low-

income ranging in between \$25,151 and \$41,950, low-income ranging in between \$41,951 and \$67,120, moderate-income in between \$67,121 and \$100,680 and middle-income ranging in between \$100,681 and \$138,435 (The City of New York 2014: 6). For the high-income, \$138,436 and more, no affordable housing options are considered. These numbers suggest that it is specific for New York City that making a living is very expensive. In other cities, an income of \$40,000 annually is by no means considered *very low-income*.

The distribution of new affordable housing to be built or to be preserved is mainly for *low-income* families, according to the official plan by Mayor Bill de Blasio. In other cities, this income bracket would be close to middle-income housing. In Harlem specifically, the income distribution differs so starkly from the rest of New York City, that the city government's term *low-income* does not fit the actual reality of inhabitants. Those designated *low-income* will receive 58% of all new affordable housing built in the whole of New York City and in Harlem specifically. Only 12% will be built or preserved for very low-income families, which are the average income group residing in Harlem. This can be seen in column 5 in table 1.

Table 1: What is Affordable Housing?

Income Band	Percentage of Areal Median Income (AMI)	Monthly Rent Required to Prevent Rent-Burden (USD)	Annual Income (for a four-person household, USD)	Housing intended to be built or preserved by city government	Harlem's Income Distribution
Extremely Low Income	0 – 30%	up to 629	up to 25,150	8%	33.5%
Very Low Income	31 – 50%	630 – 1,049	25,151 – 41,950	12%	20.9%
Low Income	51 – 80%	1,050 – 1,678	41,951 – 67,120	58%	20.3%
Moderate Income	81 – 120%	1,679 – 2,517	67,121 – 100,680	11%	11.5%
Middle Income	121 – 165%	2,518 – 3,461	100,681 – 138,435	<11%	13.8%

Source: The City of New York (2014: 6), US Census Data (2013), own extensions

In addition to those 12%, 8% are planned for extremely low-income families, which makes a total of 20% affordable units built for 54% of Harlem's overall population that fall underneath the *low-income* bracket designated by

the city government (see table 1 column 6; US Census Data 2013; Center for Urban Pedagogy 2014).

This means that in Harlem, every second household is not able to fulfill the criteria for most of the built affordable housing units. Accordingly, there must be a mismatch between the housing that is built and the housing that is actually needed in this specific neighborhood.

The reason why this mismatch came about is because affordable housing eligibility will be based on the Areal Median Income (AMI). The AMI is defined each year by the federal housing authority, which is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It is measured for all cities across the USA and is used as a reference value to determine what kinds of affordable housing will be built. These federal measures determine an algorithm of how many units the developer needs to offer to a specific income bracket so that he gets tax abatement.

It becomes visible that the AMI includes a wide range of neighborhoods that are starkly contrasted in New York in their income, as it includes very high-income neighborhoods as well as neighborhoods suffering high concentrations of poverty, which Harlem is still one of. The 2015 AMI for New York was therefore \$78,700 for a three-person family, whereas for Harlem the average income of a three-person family was \$39,650, which is roughly only half of the city's average income (Austensen et al. 2016: 6). This means that very high-income rates are included into measurements for housing that is to be built in Harlem. Nevertheless, city officials emphasize that these measurements are open to discussion with communities to develop neighborhood-specific policies that address their needs and priorities (The City of New York 2014: 48).

Hence, in Harlem as in other New York City neighborhoods, most affordable housing is going to be built for the *low-income* bracket starting from \$41,951 annually, and falling between 50% and 80% of AMI. While 54% of overall Harlemites will not be able to afford the biggest amount of housing that will be invested in, public housing residents will be exposed to higher hardship: As stated above, 8% will be built for extremely low-income families, but the upper limit of \$25,150 is still almost double as what an average public housing tenant earns. In 2009, nation-wide in public housing, annual household income averaged \$13,234, well below the federal poverty line. Only 17% received more than \$20,000 (Schwartz 2010: 130). However, it needs to be stated that NYCHA's residents have a higher income of currently \$24,423 (New York City Housing Authority 2018b).

Apparently, affordability options are not designed for specifics of the black population and will leave them in greater hardship, may this fact have been actively or passively neglected by city government.

Conclusion

The case study shows the same results as discussions in the public and scientific sphere do: affordable housing is geared towards middle income housing, first of all. It lies in the nature of public-private partnerships that some sort of profit has to be created for the investor to survive, stay in business and pay its contractors, as philanthropist he or she might be. There is a housing shortage for middle-income families in New York City, so the government needs to take these measures in order to secure housing for them now and in the future. It makes sense to find incentives in form of tax reductions to make the private companies invest.

The New York City Housing Authority actually does have a reasonable argument in making use of the overall gentrification processes in the neighborhood as long as the tax revenue is reinvested in the renovation of public housing estates. This could be further developed when NYCHA is leasing out underutilized public grounds to private investors in order to create 30% (or more) affordable housing for middle-income families instead of selling the grounds, and thus creating a profit by higher tax revenue that is ensured to flow back into the maintenance of the public housing buildings, thereby guaranteeing that those who already are in public housing will not be displaced by gentrification.

The city can keep its leverage as long as the land the affordable housing is built on stays in public hands. Selling off public grounds has proven fatal in other cities where they try to regain control over land speculation by buying back the lands at huge cost. If the city keeps the land, land speculation will be blocked. This is crucial if the government really wants to ensure everyone's right to the city.

The point to understand is that the argument of social mix actually works the other way around: Affordable housing will only be able to create and maintain a social mix, if the lower social strata do not leave. This is only possible if there continues to be housing that is fully taken out of the market and therefore remains under the responsibility of the city or state. Affordable housing, rent control, moving-to-opportunity programs etc. are important

measures to take, but in order to secure living for low-income families, especially when affected by racism or otherwise marginalized, they have to be protected by social housing. Those will not be able to pay the ever-rising rents in New York City.

Most importantly, affordable housing strategies will not pose a durable solution to low-income families and other vulnerable groups as the homeless, refugees etc. While interacting and investigating on the city government's narrative, one tends to forget the many families who are still waiting for public housing units on immense waiting lists. They live in dilapidated market rate housing in overcrowded situations because they are otherwise unable to pay the market rate rent and cannot find any other form of housing that they can pay for.

This is why the public housing stock needs not only be kept at the same level, but more public housing needs to be built. Those applying for public housing are not the ones eligible for affordable housing, as this analysis has shown. It is questionable if a city is able to provide this kind of investment on its own. The state has to provide policies in order to build more public housing. With the Trump administration, however, this is highly unlikely.

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Die Modernisierung der Konsumenten

Alltägliche Shoppingpraktiken und
Diskurse der kolonialen Zeitlichkeit in China

Marius Meinbof

China hat über das 20. Jahrhundert hinweg in jeder Generation tiefgreifende soziale Transformationsprozesse durchlaufen, geprägt etwa von Kolonialismus, sozialistischer Revolution und marktwirtschaftlicher Restrukturierung. Dieser massive, bis heute andauernde soziale Wandel hat eine kulturell sehr vielfältige, sich ständig verändernde Gesellschaft hervorgebracht, in deren Alltag fast alles aushandelbar erscheint, die deshalb aber auch ständige Anpassungsleistungen und ständiges Umdenken erzwingt – und deren Mitglieder sich zu Recht fragen, in welcher Art von Gesellschaft sie eigentlich leben und in welche Zukunft diese Gesellschaft sich bewegt. Eine häufig genutzte, klassisch soziologische Antwort auf diese Frage liegt darin, beobachtbare Praktiken zu klassifizieren, und die so gewonnenen Typen auf einem linearen Zeitstrahl zu verorten. Erfahrungen des sozialen Wandels lassen sich dann verstehen, wenn Wandel als Abfolge von Idealtypen oder als Bewegung von einem Idealtyp zum anderen beschrieben und auf einen eindeutigen Begriff gebracht wird – etwa Rationalisierung, Individualisierung oder Pluralisierung.

Diese Analysestrategie ist allerdings in der letzten Zeit häufig kritisiert worden, weil verschiedene Autoren die Vorstellung linearer Zeitlichkeit dekonstruieren (Koselleck 2004) oder die eurozentrischen, kolonialen Aspekte dieser Zeitkonzepte kritisieren (zum Beispiel Chakrabarty 1992; Wilk 1994; Escobar 1995). Oft ist nämlich lineare Zeit und die Idee eines Fortschritts hin zu einem vereinfacht gedachten Idealbild einer »modernen Gesellschaft« zusammen mit dem Versuch, die Welt in eindeutige Kategorien einzuteilen, nicht nur eine analytische Tätigkeit von Soziolog*innen, sondern auch eine Machtpraxis im erforschten Feld. Wenn wir als Soziolog*innen China erforschen, müssen wir nicht nur eine uneindeutige Gesellschaft auf den Begriff bringen, sondern eine Gesellschaft, in der es ständig unterschiedlich erfolgreiche Vereindeutigungsprojekte gibt – und in der soziologische Diskurse von Fortschritt und Moderne oft selbst Teil dieser Vereindeutigungsprojekte sind.

Die Arbeit »Shopping in China. Mikrodipositive konsumistischer Subjektivierung im Alltagsleben chinesischer Studierender« versucht, mit diesem

This article shows how sociological diagnoses of society are beset by a pessimism that is incompatible with empirical data. Historical changes in violence, poverty, pollution and social capital contradict widespread pessimistic diagnoses such as of Marx, Adorno, Bauman, Beck, and Rosa, as well as contemporary views of widespread downward mobility or even an end of capitalism. The paper explains how such unwarranted pessimism can be explained by sociologists competing for the most negative views on society, fueled by a prevalence-induced concept change, as well as an urge to improve society and radical constructivist perspectives, which led sociology towards a view of society that is more negative than society itself. The article concludes with four suggestions on how sociology can develop a more realistic view of society.

Brigitte Zamzow

Is Affordable Housing the new Social Housing?

Der Text stammt in Teilen aus der Masterarbeit »Deconcentrating Poverty in American Inner Cities? Auswirkungen der öffentlichen Wohnungspolitik auf schwarze einkommensschwache Familien im schnell wachsenden Harlem, New York City«, die mit dem DGS-Preis für herausragende Abschlussarbeiten 2018 ausgezeichnet wurde. Der Artikel stützt sich hauptsächlich auf die veröffentlichten *Affordable Housing* Informationen der Stadtregierung in New York City, um zu ermitteln, für welche Klientel die geplanten Neubauten auf öffentlichem Boden in Harlem zugeschnitten sind. Es zeigt sich, dass *Affordable Housing* eine Möglichkeit sein könnte, die Kontrolle der öffentlichen Hand in Global Cities zu stärken, aber bezahlbares Wohnen für arme und marginalisierte Bevölkerungsschichten dadurch nicht garantiert wird. Um dem städtischen Ideal der sozialen Mischung gerecht zu werden, muss daher auch in Zukunft Sozialer Wohnungsbau betrieben werden.

This contribution is derived in parts from the master thesis »Deconcentrating Poverty in American Inner Cities? Public Housing Policy's Impact on Black Low-Income Families in Rapidly Gentrifying Harlem, New York City« which was awarded the DGS prize for outstanding theses in 2018. The article relies primarily on the New York City government and NYCHA's published *Affordable Housing* information to determine which clientele will benefit from the planned new public buildings in Harlem. *Affordable housing* may be one way of strengthening public control in Global Cities. However, affordable housing will not be created for the poor and marginalized inhabitants of the city within this set of policies. This is why social housing must be protected in order to maintain and create a healthy social mix within the city.

Marius Meinhof

Die Modernisierung der Konsumenten

Dieser Artikel fasst das Buch »Shopping in China« zusammen, das 2018 den Dissertationspreis der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Soziologie gewonnen hat. Er geht dabei insbesondere auf drei der wichtigsten Befunde der Arbeit ein: Erstens, dass konsumistische Subjektivierung (auch) in alltäglichen Shoppingpraktiken stattfindet, in denen non-verbale Praktiken des Blickens und Berührens von Objekten und Personen genutzt werden, und die sich deshalb besonders gut durch videographische Methoden erforschen lassen. Zweitens, dass diese alltäglichen Praktiken der Subjektivierung in China kein kohärentes Dispositiv, sondern vielmehr eine fragmentierte Assemblage aus Mikrodispositiven hervorbringen, die so divers sind, dass herkömmliche Begriffe von »Pluralisierung« sie nicht mehr erfassen können, und die deshalb neue theoretische Begriffe erfordern. Drittens, dass von staatlichen Institutionen, aber auch von Interviewpartnern genutzte Diskurse diese Multiplizitäten nicht anerkennen, sondern sie in klar abgegrenzte Typen von »modernen« und »rückständigen« Praktiken einordnen, die ihrerseits auf einem normativen Diskurs der »kolonialen Zeitlichkeit« basieren – einem aus der Kolonialzeit überdauernden Diskurs über ein »rückständiges China«, das modernisiert werden muss.

This article is a summary of the book »Shopping in China« which won the dissertation award of the German Association for Sociology in 2018. It highlights three of the key arguments of the book: firstly, that consumerist subjectivation occurs in everyday practices of shopping which utilize the non-verbal practices of gazing at and touching oneself as well as the objects consumed. This can and should therefore be analyzed using videographic approaches. Secondly, in China, these everyday practices of subjectivation do not add up to a whole dispositive; rather, they build a fragmented assemblage of microdispositives which are diverse in a way not considered in conventional concepts of »pluralization« therefore requiring new concepts to describe them. Thirdly, discourses produced by state institutions as well as by people in interviews do not recognize these multiplicities, rather purifying them into clear-cut types of »modern« and »backward« practices based on a normative discourse of »colonial temporality« – a discourse of a backward China in need of modernization – an inheritance from the colonial era in China.